

Japanese Honeysuckle

Lonicera japonica



Pictures By (From Top to Bottom):
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Invasive Plants are a Threat to:

- **Forests and wetlands**
- **Native plants**
- **Perennial gardens**
- **Wildlife**
- **Lakes and rivers**
- **Human Health**
- **Farmland**

Description:

Japanese honeysuckle is a perennial woody vine of the honeysuckle family that spreads by seeds, underground rhizomes, and above ground runners. It has opposite oval leaves, 4-8 cm. long, that are semi-evergreen to evergreen. Older stems are hollow with brownish bark that peels in long strips. The flowers are fragrant, two-lipped, and are borne in pairs. The berries are black. It creates dense tangled thickets by a combination of stem branching, nodal rooting, and vegetative spread from rhizomes.

Distribution:

The species was introduced into the United States in 1806 on Long Island, NY. It now occurs throughout the eastern half of the United States, an area encompassing 26 states. Japanese honeysuckle's range is limited to the north by severe winter temperatures and to the west by insufficient precipitation and prolonged droughts. It is in all 92 Indiana counties, but is much more aggressive in Southern Indiana.

Problem:

Japanese honeysuckle damages forest communities by out competing native vegetation for light, below-ground resources, and by changing forest structure. The vines overtop adjacent vegetation by twining about, and completely covering, small trees and shrubs. As it becomes established it forms a dense blanket that endangers most shrubs, herbs, and trees.

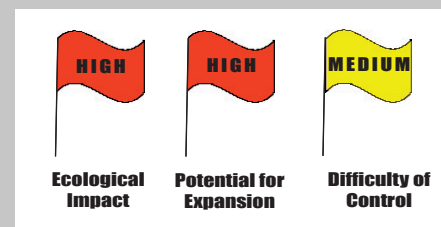
Origin:

Japanese honeysuckle is native to East Asia, including Japan and Korea. It was introduced to the United States as an ornamental plant, for erosion control, and for wildlife forage and cover. However, there are many better plant choices for those uses (see back for good alternatives).



Picture By: The Nature Conservancy.

IPSAWG Ranking:



IPSAWG Recommendation:

- Do not buy, sell or plant Japanese honeysuckle in Indiana.
- Help by eradicating Japanese honeysuckle on your property.

This ranking illustrates the results of an assessment conducted by the **Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group (IPSAWG)**, which is made up of many organizations and agencies concerned about invasive plant species. IPSAWG's goal is to assess which plant species may threaten natural areas in Indiana and develop recommendations for their use in the state.

For more information about IPSAWG and the assessment tool used to rank invasive species, visit their website:

www.invasivespecies.IN.gov

ALTERNATIVES to Japanese Honeysuckle:



Virgin's bower
(*Clematis virginiana*)



Trumpet Honeysuckle
(*Lonicera sempervirens*)



Woolly Dutchman's Pipe
(*Aristolochia tomentosa*)

Pictures By (Top to Bottom): D. Liebman, J. Lepore and S. Baskauf.

Other Alternatives:

Virginia Creeper
(*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

Crossvine
(*Bignonia capreolata*)

Not Recommended:

American bittersweet
(*Celastrus scandens*)

While American bittersweet is native and non-invasive, unfortunately, nurseries often mislabel Oriental bittersweet as American bittersweet. It is very difficult to find true American bittersweet for sale.

Control Methods:

Small populations of Japanese honeysuckle can be controlled by careful hand-pulling and removal of vines. Mowing twice a year along fields and roadsides can slow the vegetative spread but stem density may increase. Prescribed burning can greatly decrease the abundance within a habitat and limit its spread for one

to two growing seasons. Where other options are difficult, Japanese honeysuckle may be treated with a glyphosate herbicide. This is best applied at 5-8% with a spray applicator in late autumn when other vegetation is dormant but Japanese honeysuckle is still physiologically active. Be careful to follow label

guidelines when using herbicide. Reapplication may be necessary to treat plants missed during the initial treatment. **Always read and follow pesticide label directions.**



Japanese honeysuckle completely covering adjacent vegetation. (Picture By: J. M. Swearingen @ www.invasive.org)

Eight Easy Ways to Combat Invasive Plants

You can **help stop** the spread of **invasive plants** by following these **8 easy guidelines**:

1. Ask for only non-invasive species when you acquire plants. Request that nurseries and garden centers sell only non-invasive plants.
2. Seek information on invasive plants. Sources include botanical gardens, horticulturists, conservationists, and government agencies.
3. Scout your property

- for invasive species, and remove invasives before they become a problem. If plants can't be removed, at least prevent them from going to seed.
4. Clean your boots before and after visiting a natural area to prevent the spread of invasive plant seeds.
5. Don't release aquarium plants into the wild.
6. Volunteer at local parks

- and natural areas to assist ongoing efforts to diminish the threat of invasive plants.
7. Help educate your community through personal contacts and in such settings as garden clubs and civic groups.
8. Support public policies and programs to control invasive plants.

For More Information:

On this assessment and IPSAWG:

IPSAWG
www.invasivespecies.IN.gov

On identification and control techniques:

The Nature Conservancy's Wildland Weeds
www.tncweeds.ucdavis.edu

On native plant alternatives and sources:

Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society
www.inpaws.org